

PARTICIPATORY GIS FOR LOCAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT FOR THE COMMUNITY OF PORT ORFORD, OREGON

*Vicki Wedell,
Marine Resource Management Program, Oregon State University*

Keywords: participatory GIS, community-based fisheries management

Community-based management is increasingly being considered a legitimate management alternative for nearshore marine fisheries. The community of Port Orford, on the Southern Oregon Coast, is currently engaged in a collaborative process with state, federal, and local partners to develop a community-based management framework for their local fishery. In order to facilitate this goal, the Orford Reef Community Alliance (ORCA) will develop a strategic management plan that includes a comprehensive local assessment of the biological, economic and social capital of the resources that sustain this fishing community. A key component of this assessment is the creation of a community GIS database that incorporates the best available scientific information and local knowledge about the Orford reef. We propose to accomplish this through a participatory process that values and involves the local fishermen in the planning and design of the database.

The GIS-generated maps will be used as a process tool and common frame of reference for community workshops about data validity. Local knowledge verification will help identify key gaps in the ecosystem assessment. These gaps will be filled using cooperative research strategies, also providing for long-term monitoring of the Orford reef. The community validation process will be a natural segue to subsequent interviews with fishermen to share and map ecological and socioeconomic information. This project will also address the issue of shared data networks vs. secured data banks in order to develop a protocol that is acceptable to all partners.